

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER.—It is the pleasure of the House that the Resolution be withdrawn?

HON. MEMBERS.—Yes.

The resolution was, by leave withdrawn.

5.00 P. M.

STATEMENT BY THE CHIEF MINISTER

re : increasing (Prices of Foodgrains in the state)

(Open market purchase type)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER.—Now the Chief Minister may make the statement.

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS (Chief Minister) — Sir I thought that I should make a statement regarding the prices of food-grains which have caused uncertain anxieties amongst the farmers all over the State because of the fact that last year's good seasonal conditions have resulted in production being on higher scale. I must say with certain degree of gratification that the production has reached the target level which is beyond our projected level. Therefore, this in turn we call it as a problem of plenty has arisen and the paddy prices have also fallen. In addition to that even the coarse grains like hybrid jowar, maize and ragi have also fallen. They have fallen to a level below the support price or levy price. Therefore the Government have immediately stepped into the situation and we have offered to buy the coarse grain at a rate not lower than the levy rate and also we have been buying. But nevertheless there are some doubts raised apprehensions have been expressed and complaints have been received that the Food Corporation is not buying in time or somebody circulate the rumour that the Government has not enough money to buy all food-grains and also we don't have the necessary godown facilities to keep this grain that are going to be bought. Sometimes, may be the fears to be genuine. But many a time, these are all the fears borne out by certain rumours spread by the class of people who are the traditional buyers of these grains. They would like to see that the farmers give to them but not go to the Government or the Food Corporation. Therefore, I thought it proper to make a statement as to the policy and how the policy is being worked out in the State.

I rise to make a statement on the policy of Government regarding open market purchases of grain.

We have had an exceptionally good monsoon last year and, as a consequence, a bumper harvest has been realised of almost all types of grains. Unlike average years, or years of scarcity, when Government had very little role to play in the general marketing system, apart from procurement, this year's of plenty has necessitated Government playing an extremely important role in ensuring a fair return to the farmer by enabling him to sell his grain to Government itself. In other words, Government has entered in a big way into the marketing system not merely to build up its own stocks but, more important, to ensure a fair and adequate return to the farmers.

Keeping this objective in view, it was decided that Government would conduct support operations through open market purchase of paddy, hybrid jowar and ragi. In the case of paddy, as the members are aware, the rates offered were higher than the levy rates. For the major part of the procurement season open market purchases by Government were at the rates of Rs. 95 for coarse, Rs. 100 for medium, Rs. 105 for fine and Rs. 110 for superfine varieties of paddy. These rates were higher than the corresponding levy prices for these varieties of Rs. 74/-, Rs. 79/-, Rs. 84 and Rs. 89/-. However, the decision to pay higher prices was a conscious decision in order to ensure that the farmers who grow this crop obtain a fair return for their produce.

Open market purchases of paddy commenced simultaneously with procurement operations from about December last year itself and have continued since. After the major proportion of surplus paddy had been bought by Government it was considered necessary and desirable to reduce the price paid for such open market purchases by Rs. 10/- per quintal from the 1st of April 1976. The present open market prices offered by Government for paddy are Rs. 85/-, Rs. 90/-, Rs. 95/- and Rs. 100/- per quintal for coarse, medium, fine and superfine varieties.

It is realised that this may, in few cases, result in some hardship to those farmers who, for whatever reason, have not delivered paddy to the Karnataka Food & Civil Supplies Corporation at the higher prices so far offered. It is also realised that surplus paddy in district must be allowed sufficient opportunity to be marketed. Therefore, Government have decided that, simultaneously with the reduction of the price for open market purchases, the system of transport under permits of paddy between districts will be liberalised, and orders have been issued accordingly.

We have so far bought through the open market nearly 1,18,000 tonnes of paddy which by any standards is considerable. I would like to make it clear at this point that open market operations

continue and will continue and carrying to be made at the prices fixed by Government from 1st of April 1976. After the prices were reduced for such purchases from 1-4-1976 we have, in fact, bought 4471 tonnes of paddy.

Similar considerations induced us to undertake such support operations in the case of hybrid jowar and ragi. In the case of these grains orders have been issued that open market purchases will be made at Rs. 74/-per quintal which is the support price fixed for coarse grain. In fact, all the purchase points of the Karnataka Food & Civil Supplies Corporation through which procurement and open market purchases of paddy are made were also purchase points for hybrid jowar and ragi in areas where these crops are grown. In the case of maize, both the Food Corporation of India and the Karnataka Food & Civil Supplies Corporation have operated. I would like to mention that, thanks to these operations, prices have invariably stabilised or registered a rise over the extremely low levels prevailing earlier. Simultaneously with open market operations of coarse grains free movement was permitted not merely within the State but to place outside also.

We have bought nearly 9,000 tonnes of ragi, 907 tonnes of hybrid jowar and 826 tonnes of maize. As I have mentioned earlier, thanks to these operations, the prices stabilised and growers were able to obtain higher prices which was also one of the essential objectives of the support operations.

I would like to indicate, at this point, that Government have always responded to the situation on the agricultural front and taken into consideration the realities of the situation so far as the procurement or open market operations are concerned. As I have indicated earlier, wherever it was necessary, Government have gone all out to ensure support to the farmers. Similarly, when it was noticed that excess rains had an unfortunate effect on kharif jowar, procurement operations of kharif jowar were slowed down, Support operations for kharif and rabi jowar, other than hybrid jowar, have not been found to be necessary because the prices of these types of jowar have not fallen below the support price of Rs. 74/-per quintal.

I have indicated so far what has been done by way of support operations. I would like to state that it is the intention of Government to continue open market operations of paddy and ragi at the prices fixed for these operations and under no circumstances will a farmer be turned away if he offers grain of standard specifications at the prices fixed by us. I would also like to mention that in the case of wheat Government will commence similar operations and will by wheat grown in the State Rs. 105/- per quintal. In fact, the

Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Corporation has been issued clear instructions on this matter and I would like to assure the members that they need have no doubt on this score. I would like to emphasise again that support operations for paddy, ragi and wheat and, if necessary, kharif and rabi jowar continue to be one of the major planks of our policy.

Apart from this Statement, I would also like to clarify.

SRI KAGODU THIMMAPPA.—What is the levy collection of paddy?

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS.—I think we have already reached a target of more than 2.25 lakh tonnes.

In the northern region of our State where jowar, is the main crop, khariff and rabi jowar, people from that region say that levy should not be taken from the farmers so far as jowar is concerned. As a matter of fact, this time, we have been going very slow with regard to the procurement of jowar because the crops are affected by heavy rains. Government is fully aware that they are not to the expectation of the farmers and the Government. Therefore we have given instructions to the Deputy Commissioners regarding procurement of jowar that they should go very slow in the matter. Though we have fixed up a target of jowar but we have reached only one-sixtieth of the target. There was another fear expressed that the prices of rabi and khariff jowar would go down during this season. We have watched the prices and we find that the prices are not below the procurement prices of Government. In spite of it, people want that the Government should buy. I straightaway tell them that the Government would buy khariff and rabi jowar at the procurement price. But I am afraid there are none to sell. In case the Hon'ble members induced the farmers in their regions to sell jowar, I would be very happy to buy it at the levy rate. We are also watching the situation. In the event of the prices coming down below the levy price, then certainly we are here to buy. Even otherwise I am prepared to buy it. But according to our own study of the situation, nobody is willing to sell it because the ruling rate in the open market in Gulbarga region is at Rs. 110 to Rs. 120 or Rs. 130. I think even in regions like Dharwar and Bijapur, it is not below Rs. 100 but it is anywhere above Rs. 100.

Again I emphasise the fact that I am willing and anxious to buy because I know the levy target of jowar, we are not going to achieve the target, by any standard it will be negligible. I am aware that we will not be in a position to have enough stocks of khariff or rabi jowar. If there is any doubt in any body's mind, I would like to clear it here that Government is not saying that we do not want the

stocks of jowar. We have committed to informal rationing in many places and therefore we want jowar procurement also. But in the light of the representations made that the jowar crop is bad, we need not harass the farmers, that is why we have kept quiet. In this process, I am afraid that we may not have the stocks of jowar. Therefore I am prepared to buy provided the farmers come forward to sell.

The other point which I would like to say here is this: so far as the finances are concerned, I can unhesitatingly tell this House that there is no dearth for finance. Thanks to the Reserve Bank of India and the Government of India, with a view to give support price to the farmers and also the purchase operations of Government, they have said that they are not going to put any limit on the finances; Government would pay as much money as is required to buy such quantity that is necessary to keep this level of prices at a established level.

Regarding the other issue, namely, lack of godown facilities, this is one other point that has been mentioned and even farmers are told that there are no godown facilities and that Government is not in a position to purchase. They are also told that even though they have money, they may not be in a position to operate on such a big scale. Even this is an unfounded fear because it is true that Government does not have all the godowns that are necessary to stock all the grains that the farmers have grown or all the grain that comes to the market. That means, Government at the moment do not have their own godowns which they can call Government godowns. We have built some godowns and some other godowns are in the process of being built. They are going to be completed shortly. In addition to this, there are other methods of procuring godown facilities. Private people's godowns are there. Mill owners have got lot of godown. Government have also got powers to requisition anybody's house or any construction in any place if Government feels that house or construction is required for stocking foodgrains. Under the D.I.R. which is in operation today, the Government is in a position to requisition at any minute any building whether it is private or institution. I would also like to inform this House that the D.Cs. of districts have been delegated full powers under the D.I.R. to requisition any building for the purpose of using it as a godown. Therefore, I would like to tell the farmers of Karnataka State through this August House that they need not have any apprehension regarding either finance or the ability of the Government to have enough godown facilities to stock foodgrains that the Government is going to buy on a large scale.

Lastly, taking advantage of this situation and the falling prices, what the antisocial elements or the traditional blood-suckers of the farmers are doing is that they go and tell the farmers that Government do not have these facilities, the finance, this and that and they indirectly force them to sell the grains to them. Some ignorant farmers are prone to believe these things and what they do when the Government does not buy or is unable to give money immediately for the grain they buy is that they will be directed to the private merchants who will quote their own rates. It has happened in the case of jowar, ragi and maize. Luckily it has not yet happened in the case of kharif jowar and rabi jowar. I do not wish that should happen but if it so happens, Government will be every ready to step into the breach and fill up the gap. I would appeal to the farmers not to be victims of these greedy merchants who want to dupe the farmers. May be, here and there some local difficulties may be there. I do not say that everywhere everything has been made perfect. May be, in certain parts of the district at some purchase point some officer of the official concerned may not be efficiently managing things. Those are some difficulties which we can overcome; they are insuperable. As and when these things come to their notice, they can talk to the officers concerned and see that they are rectified. Therefore, the farmers should go direct to the purchase points opened by the Food Corporation and I have gone to the extent of telling and cautioning people that those persons who buy paddy from more than one farmer and who want to sell that collected paddy to the Food Corporation we have given clear instructions not to receive that paddy. Because if they were to receive it, then it will be a kind of encouragement for others to do likewise. ಅವರು ಡಿಕ್ಲೇರೇಷನ್ ಮಾಡಬೇಕು, ಅವಿ ವಸೂಲಿಗೋಸ್ಕರ ಏಜನ್ರಿ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಅವರಿಗೆ ಕಮೀಷನ್ ಕೂಡ ನಾವೇ ಕೊಡುತ್ತಾ ಇದ್ದೇವೆ.

ಶ್ರೀ ಕಾಗೋಡು ತಿಮ್ಮಪ್ಪ.—ಬೇರೆ ಕಡೆ ೭೦-೮೦ ರೂಪಾಯಿಗೆ ಕೊಂಡು ಕೊಡಲು ಬಂದು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ೧೦೦ ರೂಪಾಯಿಗೆ ಕೊಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS.—How can I help everybody? When it is clearly stated that the farmer can directly bring it and give. How I am to help? I can see that purchase points are there, but I cannot go to every farmer's house. It is an impossible task. If he wants to bring and if he wants to take advantage of the offer, let him do so.

ಶ್ರೀ ಕಾಗೋಡು ತಿಮ್ಮಪ್ಪ.—ಆಹಾರ ಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳಿಗೂ ಹೇಳಿದ್ದೇನೆ, ಯಾರು ಮಾಡುವರು ?

ಶ್ರೀ ಡಿ. ದೇವರಾಜ ಅರಸ್.—ನೀವು ಮಾಡಬೇಕು.

ಶ್ರೀ ಸಿ. ಬೈರೇಗೌಡ —ಅವಿ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ರೈತರ ಹತ್ತಿರ ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾರೆ.

ಶ್ರೀ ಡಿ ದೇವರಾಜ ಅರಸ್.—ಅವಿ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದಕ್ಕೂ ಇದಕ್ಕೂ ಅಜಗಜಾಂತರ ವತ್ಯಾಸ ಇದೆ.

ಶ್ರೀ ಕಾಗೋಡು ತಿಮ್ಮಪ್ಪ.—ಪ್ರವೈಟ್‌ನರು ಒಪನ್ ಮಾರ್ಕೆಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪರ್ಚೇಸ್ ಮಾಡುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಅವಕಾಶ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದೀರಾ ;

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS —How can I help? There was a time when Government was rather worried whether they could get us much paddy as they would require. That was why we wanted the agents to bring paddy from the open market price. Now we have got sufficient stock with us. In spite of that, why should I continue to have these purchases? That is only to see that the price which the farmers get does not come down. If they think that they can get better price elsewhere, they are free to. You cannot say that I should not have got these agents. If I had no agents when paddy was required for us last time, the position would have been difficult. We have experience last time when in the open market nobody would come forward to sell because the prices were high. If the farmers also play the game properly it easy for us. They also wait and see when in the open market they can get more. Nobody comes to us then. It is only when the prices fall they rush to us. Therefore, I cannot switch over from one thing to another. It is difficult. Now we have come to realise that we need not have agents, services any more. The farmers have right to come straight away and give paddy. I have even gone to the extent of saying, keep off from such people who have purchased paddy from several farmers and want to make money out of it. That is the position.

5-30 P. M.

ಶ್ರೀ ಕಾಗೋಡು ತಿಮ್ಮಪ್ಪ.—ಹೀಗೆ ಹೇಳಿದ ಕೂಡಲೇ ನಮಗೆ ಕೊಡಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಒಂದು ಕ್ವಿಂಟಾರ್ ಲೆವಿ ಅವರು ಕೊಟ್ಟರೆ ಅವರಿಂದ ೬ ಕ್ವಿಂಟಾರ್ ಅಷ್ಟು ಧಾನ್ಯವನ್ನು ಓಪನ್ ಮಾರ್ಕೆಟ್ ರೇಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತೇನೆ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದೀರಿ. ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಇದನ್ನು ಕೊಳ್ಳುವವರು ಯಾರು ಬರಲಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾರೆ. ತಾವು ಈ ಮಾತನ್ನು ಹೇಳಬೇಡಿ.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER —All the doubts have been cleared. The Hon'ble Chief Minister has made a candid statement and there should be no further question.

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS.—I may disclose to the House that in district from where Sri Kagodu Thimmappa comes, the farmers are not even now coming forward to sell.

ಶ್ರೀ ಕಾಗೋಡು ತಿಮ್ಮಪ್ಪ.—ಹೊಸನಗರದಿಂದ, ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗದಿಂದ ಗಾಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದವರನ್ನು ದುಡ್ಡಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂದು ವಾಪಸ್ ಕಳುಹಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಕೂಡ ಇದನ್ನು ಕೊಳ್ಳುವವರು ಯಾರೂ ಮುಂದೆ ಬರಲಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾರೆ.

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS.—The hon'ble member should have patience to know things. Such a situation might have obtained for a week or ten days because there was a time gap between the Reserve Bank and Government of India liberalising the policy of giving financial aid to Government and the time of purchase. Now, I would like to to know from him as to how many lakhs of tonnes of paddy he is going to get from his district. I am prepared to buy all that.

ಶ್ರೀ ಎಂ. ಎಸ್. ಕೃಷ್ಣನ್.—ಸ್ವಾಮಿ, ತಾವು ಈಗ ಪರ್ಜೆಸ್ ರೇಟನ್ನು ೮೫-೯೦-೯೫ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದೀರಿ. ಈ ರೀತಿಯಾಗಿ ಕೊಂಡುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ರೇಟು ಇಳಿದರೂ ಕೂಡ ಆ ಅಕ್ಕಿ ನಗರಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದಾಗ ಮಾಮೂಲಿನಂತೇ ೨-೪೦, ೨ ೬೦ ಇದೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಏನು ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದೀರಿ?

ಶ್ರೀ ಡಿ. ದೇವರಾಜ ಅರಸ್.—ಯಾರೋ ಪ್ರೈವೇಟ್ ಪಾರ್ಟಿಯವರು ಈ ರೀತಿ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾರೆ ಇರಬೇಕು, ನಾವಲ್ಲ.

ಶ್ರೀ ಎಂ. ಎಸ್. ಕೃಷ್ಣನ್.—ನಿಮ್ಮ ಕೋ ಆಪರೇಟೀವ್ ಸೊಸೈಟಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜನತಾ ಬಜಾರ್‌ನಲ್ಲೇ ಈ ರೀತಿ ಮಾರುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಶ್ರೀ ಡಿ. ದೇವರಾಜ ಅರಸ್.—ಕೋಆಪರೇಟೀವ್ ಸೊಸೈಟಿಯವರ ಆ ರೀತಿ ಮಾಡಿದರು ಎಂದರೆ ಫೋರ್ ಫೈಸ್ ಪಾಪ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡಿ ಎಷ್ಟು ಇದೆ ಅನ್ನುವುದು ಗೊತ್ತಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

(ಶ್ರೀ ಸಿ. ಬೈರೇಗೌಡರು, ಶ್ರೀ ಕಾಗೋಡು ತಿಮ್ಮಪ್ಪನವರು, ಶ್ರೀ ಕೆ. ಹೆಚ್ ಹನುಮೇಗೌಡರು, ಮತ್ತು ಶ್ರೀಮಾನ್ ಹೆಚ್. ಟಿ. ಕೃಷ್ಣಪ್ಪನವರು ಈ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾತನಾಡುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಎದ್ದು ನಿಂತರು.)

ಶ್ರೀ ಸಿ. ಬೈರೇಗೌಡ.—ಈವೊತ್ತು ರೈತನಿಂದ ಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಧಾನ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ೧೦ ರೂಪಾಯಿ ಬೆಲೆಯನ್ನು ಇಳಿಸಿದ್ದೀರಿ. ಆದರೆ ಅವನಿಗೇ ಇದೇ ರೀತಿಯಾಗಿ ಗೊತ್ತಾದ ರೇಟ್ ಏನಾದರೂ ಇಳಿಸಿದ್ದೀರಾ, ಎಲೆಕ್ಟ್ರಿಸಿಟಿ ಚಾರ್ಜ್‌ಡರ್ಸ್ ಏನಾದರೂ ಇಳಿಸಿದ್ದೀರಾ ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಅವನಿಗೆ ಬೇಕಾದ ಇತರೇ ಸಾಮಾನುಗಳ ರೇಟನ್ನು ಏನಾದರೂ ಕಡಿಮೆ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದೀರಾ?

ಶ್ರೀ ಹೆಚ್. ಟಿ. ಕೃಷ್ಣಪ್ಪ.—ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು ಇದರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಒಂದು ದೊಡ್ಡ ವಿವರಣೆಯನ್ನೇ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅದರೂ ಕೂಡ ನಾವು ಕೆಲವು ಸಂಶಯಗಳನ್ನು ತಿಳಿದುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಆ ಸಂಶಯಗಳನ್ನು ನಾವು ಕೇಳಿ ಬೇಡವೇ, ಅವರು ಉತ್ತರ ಕೊಡುವುದು ಬೇರೆ ವಿಷಯವಾಯಿತು. ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿ ನಮ್ಮ ಸಂಶಯವನ್ನಾದರೂ ನಿವಾರಣೆ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಲ್ಲ.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER.—There is no scope for further question on the Statement. The Hon'ble Chief Minister has made a candid statement and it's quite clear. Under rule 306 of the Rules of Procedure there is no scope for asking any question. I shall read the rule :

“A statement may be made by a Minister on a matter of public importance with consent of the speaker, but no question shall be asked at the time the statement is made.”

Further according to the Practice and Procedure, written by Sri Kaul:

“as a rule no question is permitted after the statement is made because there is no formal motion before the House on which a debate may take place”

Now I call the next item. In the Agenda.

Private Members Resolutions (Contd.)

(iii) *Re: revision and enhancement of pensioners in some particular circumstance.*

ಶ್ರೀ ಟಿ. ಆರ್. ಶಾಮಣ್ಣ (ಕೋಟೆ).—ಮಾನ್ಯ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರೇ ನನ್ನ ನಿರ್ಣಯ ಈ ರೀತಿ ಇದೆ:—

“ವಿಶ್ರಾಂತಿ ವೇತನವನ್ನು ವಿನಿಮಯ ಮಾಡಿರುವ ಹಾಗೂ ಅವರು ಪಡೆಯುವ ಪ್ರೋತ್ಸಾಹ ಧನಕ್ಕೆ ಯುಕ್ತ ಬಡ್ತಿ ಸೇರಿಸಿ ಅವರು ವಿನಿಮಯ ಮಾಡಿದ ಹಣ ಸರ್ಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂದಾಯವಾದಂಥ ವಿಶ್ರಾಂತಿ ವೇತನದಾರರಿಗೆ ಸದರಿ ವಿಶ್ರಾಂತಿ ವೇತನವನ್ನು ಸೂಕ್ತವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸುವಂತೆ ಈ ಸಭೆಯವರು ಸರ್ಕಾರದವರಿಗೆ ಶಿಫಾರಸ್ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾರೆ.”